DEMOCRATIC

GERMAN REPORT

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German People Need Peace Treaty

SOVIETS SUPPORT EAST GERMAN PLEA

Germany needs a peace treaty immediately in order to prevent the danger of a reborn nazi army and new attempts by German militarism to launch an aggression, the government of the German Democratic Republic stated in a letter addressed to the governments of the Four Great Powers.

The German people were fully aware of their guilt for the Hitler war, but they believed that they were entitled to a peace treaty as laid down at the Potsdam Conference, stated the letter, dispatched on February 13th.

"The government of the German Democratic Republic expresses the hope that the Allied Powers will make a decision in a positive sense, thus bringing to an end the present abnormal conditions in Germany" the letter stated.

First reply was received on February 20th from the government of the Soviet Union, stating:

"The Soviet government . . . will for its part do all that is possible in order to expedite the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany and the re-establishment of the unity of the German state." (Full texts of both letters on page 2.)

The West German government flatly declined to support the request of the government of the German Democratic Republic, stating that the first step to a peace conference must be the holding of free and secret all-German elections, under international control.

Replying to this claim on February 24th, Otto Grotewohl, Prime Minister of the German Democratic Republic recalled the offers made by his government on the subject of all-German elections, all of which had been rejected by the West German government, and continued:

"Adenauer only wants international control by the UN in order to prevent discussion between Germans themselves on the electoral law.

"Why should representatives of Brazil, Pakistan, Iceland and Holland frame an electoral law for Germany? Germans will vote, and they should vote in accordance with a German electoral law.

"We want and need a peace treaty because it would cancel the war treaties concluded by Adenauer, and save the people from being dragged into a new war."

LONGSHOREMEN QUIT MUNITIONS SHIP

Dockers in Hamburg, West Germany, walked off the British ship "Rhineland" when they found they were expected to unload 150 tons of ammunition. 1200 unemployed dock workers demonstratively turned down work on the shipment.

Since summer 1951, when West German longshoremen and sailors resolved at a Bremen conference to refuse work on war shipments, work has been refused on a total of six munitions ships in Hamburg harbour.

From Bavaria, at the other end of West Germany, comes the news that 29 policemen, ordered to attend a special training course, refused further service when they discovered that the "course" consisted of infantry training.

CANNON KINGS CASH IN

West German industry is already playing an important part in the rearmament programme, according to American High Commission spokesmen. Six big armaments firms, all of which worked for Hitler, have received huge orders for high-frequency equipment, including radar and bomb-sights, and steps are already under way to re-tool several factories for the production of military vehicles at the rate of 50,000 yearly.

U.S. Aircraft Orders

Among the 4000 orders for machine tools for American and British arms works which have been placed with West German firms is an order from the Curtiss-Wright aircraft concern in the United States for 400 special machines.

Early in February industrialists were invited to an exhibition in Frankfurt, American Zone, at which samples of miltary equipment needed by the United States armed forces were on display. Tenders were invited from the German industrialists, and the tender form stated specifically:

"Offers are particularly invited from firms with previous experience in supplying equipment of this pattern."

40,000 Sergeants Needed

Open preparations for the establishment of a huge new West German army marked time during the second half of February, owing to the overwhelming rejection by the German and French people of remilitarisation plans. Behind the scenes, however, preparations continued. A government spokesman in Bonn indicated the size of the army contemplated by stating that "at least" 40,000 experienced non-commissioned officers would be needed.

Documents of the Day:

TEXTS OF PEACE TREATY LETTERS

Here is the text of the letter addressed on February 13th 1952 to the four great powers:

The government of the German Democratic Republic, filled with great anxiety about the future of Germany, addresses itself at a serious moment in German history to the governments of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the French Republic, with the request that they expedite the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany.

Although nearly seven years have passed since the capitulation of Hitler Germany, Germany has not yet got the peace treaty to which she is entitled. Germany is partitioned, and the German people have not, at the present time, the opportunity of building up their own united, independent, peace-loving and democratic state.

In the decisions of the Potsdam Conference the Allied Powers guaranteed the German people a peace treaty and the re-establishment of German unity, and showed the German people that they had a chance to play a worthy place in the family of the peace-loving peoples of the world.

Guilt Acknowledged

The German people are fully aware of their guilt for the Hitler war: they do not believe however that they are being justly treated.

The German people are filled with the wish and the desire for peace, and for the unity of state and economy. They want to live in peaceful alliance with the peoples of the world, and they want to improve their standard of living by rebuilding a peace economy. The German people do not wish to be dragged into any international complications and conflicts connected with the attempts made by aggressive forces to exploit the lack of a peace treaty and the partitioning of Germany in order to unleash a new world war.

A peace treaty with Germany is necessary for the German people so that they can end the partitioning of Germany and create a united, independent, democratic and peace-loving state.

A peace treaty would make the peaceful development of the German state possible, and would, in accordance with the national interests of the German people, preserve and ensure peace in Europe.

A peace treaty with Germany is necessary in order to prevent the danger of the rebirth of German militarism, and new attempts by German militarism to launch an aggression.

A peace treaty would enable the German people to devote their entire strength to the service of peaceful construction.

A peace treaty would ensure the speedy establishment of normal relations between Germany and other states, and would give the German people a status of equality with all the peace-loving peoples of the world.

Fight Militarism

The government of the German Democratic Republic hereby declares that it will act with determination to put into practice the principles detailed above. The government will fight decisively against any attempt to revive German militarism, which threatens to involve Germany in a new world war. Such a world war would mean for the German people a murderous civil war between Germans, and the destruction of Germany.

The government of the German Democratic Republic expects the government of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics to consider and to comply with the request for the speeding-up of the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany. The government of the German Democratic Republic expresses the hope that the Allied Powers will make a decision in a positive sense, thus bringing to an end the present abnormal conditions in Germany.

A letter with similar text has been dispatched to the governments of the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the French Republic.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic.

(signed) O. Grotewohl,
Prime Minister

SOVIET REPLY

On February 20th 1952, the following reply was received from the government of the Soviet Union:

The Soviet government confirms the receipt of the letter of the government of the German Democratic Republic on the question of expediting the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany, which was addressed to the governments of the Soviet Union, the United States of America, Great Britain and France.

The Soviet government agrees with the opinion of the government of the German Democratic Republic expressed in this letter. The Soviet government is of the opionion that it is an absolutely abnormal situation that, nearly seven years after the end of the war, Germany still has no peace treaty, and that the German state is split into separate parts.

The government of the USSR is of the opinion that the prompt conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany in accordance with the Potsdam Agreement, and with the participation of Germany, is necessary. The government is convinced that this lies in the interests of all peace-loving peoples in Europe.

The Soviet government, recognising that the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany is of the greatest importance for the stabilisation of peace in Europe, will for its part do all that is possible in order to expedite the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany and the re-establishment of the unity of the German state.

The Soviet government expects the other great powers which exert control functions in Germany to take corresponding steps.

(retranslated from the German)

. . . *And the other side*

While the German Democratic Republic was receiving the full support of the Soviet Union in its plea for a peace treaty, the West German government was engaged in war negotiations with the western powers. On February 19th the following communique was issued in London:

The Foreign Ministers of the United States, France and the United Kingdom and the Chancellor of the (West) German Federal Republic met for discussions in the Foreign Office on February 18th and 19th . . .

The Foreign Ministers and the Chancellor are well pleased with the results of their work. . . On the difficult problem concerning the future regulation and distribution, in the interests of western defence, of arms production in the states of the European defence community they have reached certain conclusions . . . They reached agreement on methods for dealing with the question of war criminals now detained in the Federal Republic.

E. GERMAN MINERS GET BIG PAY RISE

1951 plan report shows great strides

Industrial production in the German Democratic Republic rose almost 22 percent in the first year of the Five Year Plan, and there was a corresponding rise in the standard of living, the official report on the results of the 1951 plan showed.

Five sweeping general price reductions during the year brought savings of over two thousand million marks to the general public, and average wages in many branches of industry showed a sharp upward trend. Biggest wage hoists were in mining, with an average of 20 percent more in the wage packet, and machine building, metal trades and the electrical industry with increases of between 13 and 18 percent.

Industrial production increased not only in the nationally owned factories but also in the many factories in private hands. Private industry showed a production rise of 12 percent during 1951.

Biggest stride taken by an individual branch of industry was that in motor truck production, which quadrupled output during the year. Outstanding advances were made in steel production, electrical machinery, tractors, wool cloth and private car production, all of which turned out over 50 percent more than in the previous year.

The plan report makes no reference to jobless, since there is no unemployment in the German Democratic Republic. On the contrary, a considerable increase in the labour force was reported, with thirty percent of all industrial jobs now held by women, who receive equal pay for equal work in all branches.

The report sharply criticized certain less satisfactory features in the economic development. Typical criticisms were:

"The State Secretariat for Coal and power has not exploited to the full the possibilities of increasing electricity production . . ."

"The quality of the production of the textile, shoe and foodstuffs industry . . . is not yet up to the standards demanded by the working people."

"The mechanisation of agriculture . . . has not reached a standard consonant with the technical development of the German Democratic Republic."

Such criticisms are taken very seriously in the branches of industry and agriculture concerned, and serious steps are taken to improve the situation.

In addition, more and more clinics and rest homes are going up, and there is a steady improvement in minor matters like the quality of canteen meals. Working shoes and working clothing are provided completely free of cost to all miners.

All these developments are still in their early stages however, and only the maintenance of peace will allow us to go on improving them.

The developments in West Germany provide the sharpest possible contrast. There the Adenauer government is preparing for war at the cost of the living standards of the population.

The exploitation of the miners by the mine owners has been increased by the "profit-sharing scheme" introduced at the beginning of January this year. The Bonn government and the right-wing union leaders call this American system "profit-sharing", but the men in the pits call it the "miner-murdering" system.

Sweating System

This new system means that previous methods of working in gangs have been abandoned, leaving each man to himself. At the beginning of the shift each face-worker is allotted a certain length of seam, a length which it is impossible for him to hew in the course of an eight hour shift. The result is that he puts in overtime, overexerts himself, and neglects the safety regulations.

In the Ruhr pit "Fuerst Leopold Baldur" a miner died recently as the result of overexertion, and not a single day passes without reports of deaths and injuries, particularly as a result of roof falls which can be directly ascribed to the use of this American system.

Pits Closing

As a result of the adoption of the Schuman Plan by the Bonn government, arrangements are being made to close down pits in Essen, Bochum, Muelheim and Herbede employing a total of over 7000 miners. The presence of a standing army of unemployed is intended to enable the pit bosses to break the resistance of the miners still in work.

At the recent All-German Miners' Conference in Essen miners from all parts of the country demonstrated clearly that they had no intention of digging a single shovelful of coal or iron ore for war purposes. United action by the miners must act as a signal for all workers in Germany to stand together in the fight against war.

Two ways for the Miner

by Adolf Hennecke

The author of this article, a coal-face worker, initiated the activist movement in the German Democratic Republic in 1948 by hewing nearly four times the normal quantity of coal. He received the National Prize for his work in popularising the activist movement, which aims at greater production through the use of brain not brawn.

The miners who provide the raw materials forming the basis for a better life for the whole population receive the particular care of the government of the German Democratic Republic. Here are some examples.

Mining operations in East Germany are being steadily mechanised, in order to relieve the miner of the heaviest physical labour. In 1951 the proportion of coal cut by shot-blowing rose from 12 percent to 45.9 percent. At the same time, stringent new safety measures, and proper inspection by the trade unions to see that they are adhered to, have greatly improved conditions. A government grant of two million marks has been made for safety measures in the potash mines alone. Ventilation has been improved all round, and new safety regulations on the use of explosives are in preparation.

Wages in the mining industry stand at the very top of the list of industrial wages, and in addition miners are granted special allowances for unbroken periods of work in the mines. After five years employment, for instance, a miner receives an extra 12 percent on his wages.

All mine-workers over the age of 50 who have completed 25 years in the mines, at least 15 of which have been spent at the coal face, receive monthly pensions ranging as high as 400 marks.

PROFILE

LILLY WAECHTER — GERMAN HOUSEWIFE

You would scarcely notice her if you saw her standing beside you at the grocery store or super-market — just a dumpy cheerful middle-aged woman in a rain-coat and a non-descript sort of hat.

But in October 1951 this ordinary West German housewife was sentenced to eight month imprisonment and fined 15,000 West Marks — over 3,000 dollars.

What was her crime? Forgery, perhaps, or cruelty to children? Not a bit of it. She was sentenced for telling the truth, and even the American Military Court which imposed this monstrous sentence did not dispute that she had told the truth.

Here is what happened. In May 1951 the Korean Democratic Women's League invited 21 women from 17 different countries to visit their country to see the terrible results of the war there.

Bombed Villages

The delegates came from all sorts of different parties and professions, and one of them was Frau Lilly Waechter, housewife, aged 51, a member of the Social Democratic Party of Germany all her adult life.

She, and the other members of the delegation, saw the bombed and burned villages, the mass graves, the mutilated children, and all the misery and destruction of war.

When she returned to West Germany Lilly Waechter, filled with rage und compassion and a sense of the burning urgency of making sure that the same fate did not overcome her own homeland, began to address meetings.

In simple words she told of her journey, and what she had seen and heard of the horrible things done by the foreign troops of intervention fighting in Korea.

"Hostile Acts"

Suddenly she was arrested, and charged, under Law No. 14, passed by the Western Allied High Commission in 1949, with:

"acts showing hostility and lack of respect to the allied forces by making statements about atrocities, brutalities and tortures inflicted by American soldiers in North Korea on helpless women and children."

The witnesses who appeared to testify against her were an interesting collection — one American Counter Intelligence Corps official, two German detectives, and two German employees of the American occupation forces.

"Truth Immaterial"

Summing up, the American judge said "The question of the truth or falsity of the statements made by the accused are not under discussion"; he then proceeded to sentence her to eight months in jail and 15.000 marks fine.

The sentence raised a storm of protest, not only in Germany but in other parts in the world, and in January 1952 her appeal against the sentence was heard by the American High Court in Frankfurt. After hearing defence arguments by British King's Counsel D. N. Pritt, famous international lawyer, the court adjourned, stating that its findings would be announced later. At the time of writing no announcement had been made.

Meanwhile Lilly Weachter continues to fight for peace, and against the new nazi army. She knows only too well what nazism means. Her brother was kicked to death by a SS man in Buchenwald Concentration Camp in 1939, her mother was gassed in Auschwitz, her father starved to death in Theresienstadt camp.

Sit-down Strike

Latest example of her determination and fighting spirit came on February 24th when she led 500 women in a sit-down strike in the little town of Loeffingen in the French Zone when police tried to shut down an international women's conference held there.

Heavily armed West German police and French military police surrounded the hall where the conference, attended by women from France and Switzerland as well as Germany, was being held, and ordered it closed. The five hundred delegates, led by Frau Waechter, kept their seats and refused to budge until they had completed the whole business of the conference, which was called to foster good neighbourly relations between countries.

Jew-baiter rants again

One of Hitler's loudest-mouthed anti-Semitic agitators is back at work again running a speakers' course in West Berlin for the German Party, one of the parties represented in the West German coalition government.

He is Dr Martin Loepelmann, a sixty year old grammar school teacher who became a nazi town councillor in Berlin in 1929. In the same year he stated at a public meeting:

"We shall not rest until we have chased this Jewish republic to the devil, where it belongs. We shall hang the Jewish wire-pullers on the nearest lamp-posts. We have plenty of lamp-posts."

In 1930 he was elected to the Reichstag, and became notorious for his anti-Jewish outbursts there. In the same year he was specially commended by Goebbels for organising the riots against the anti-war film "All Quiet on the Western Front".

After Hitler had taken over he became head of the National Socialist Scholars' League, and in this capacity stated:

"I know of no better reading than that provided by the 'Stuermer' issued by Party-Comrade Julius Streicher. This paper, which shows the Jews as they are, should be used as a reading book in the schools."

A West Berlin court has sentenced a young ex-soldier to life imprisonment for shooting a Gestapo man a few months before the end of the war. The sentence was passed on Karl Wolff, aged 28, who in February 1945 deserted from the nazi army and hid with a friend in Berlin. When a Gestapo man found their hiding place and tried to arrest them Wolff shot him dead.

The court ruled that Wolff could not be allowed to plead self defence.

The "Freikorps Deutschland" (Free Corps Germany), a neo-nazi paramilitary organisation led by former high-ranking S.A. and S.S. officers will hold a mass rally on the Lueneberg Heath in the British Zone at Easter, reports the independent West German paper "Neue Presse". The "Political Education" branch of the organisation is headed by Alfred Frauenfeld, former nazi Gauleiter in Austria.

Individual branches of the Free Corps have such names as "Doenitz", "Marshal Petain", "Nuremberg", and "Werl" and "Landsberg" after the two main jails for war criminals.

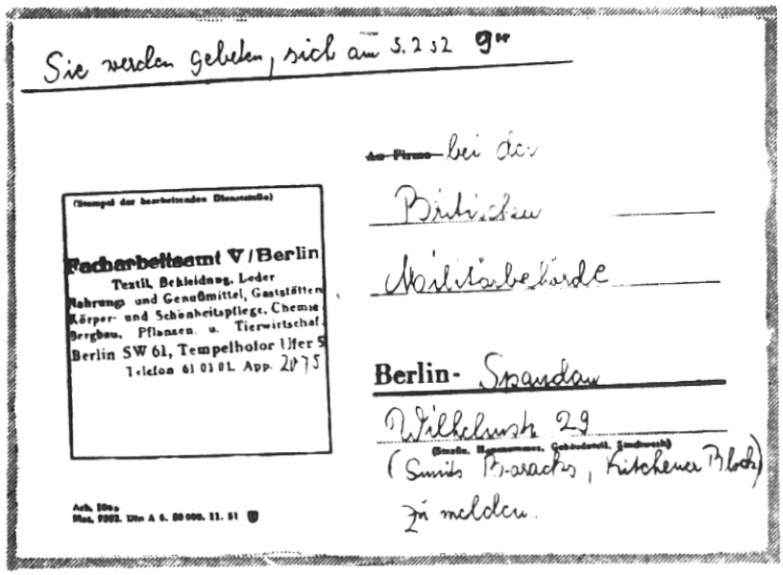
British army press-gangs Berlin jobless

This harmless looking form, handed out at a West Berlin Labour Exchange, has been the passport into a camouflaged German army for thousands of West Berlin unemployed.

The form states simply:

"Please report on 5. 2. 52 at 9 a. m. to the British Military Authorities, Berlin-Spandau, Wilhelmstraße 29, Smuts Barracks, Kitchener Block."

On the left hand side it bears the stamp of Labour Exchange V, West Berlin, situated on the Tempelhofer Ufer in the American Sector.


Sie werden gebeten, sich am 5.2.52 9[00]
bei der
Britischen
Militärbehörde
Berlin- Spandau
Wilhelmstr. 29
(Smuts Barracks, Kitchener Block)
zu melden.
(Stempel der bearbeitenden Dienststelle)
Facharbeitamt V/Berlin
Textil, Bekleidung, Leder
Nahrungs- und Genußmittel, Gaststätten
Körper- und Schönheitspflege, Chemie
Bergbau, Pflanzen- u. Tierwirtschaft
Berlin SW 61, Tempelhofer Ufer 9
Telefon 61 01 01, App. 2075

"Watchmen" Wanted

The particular form reproduced above was handed out early in February this year to Horst Peters, who lives at 36 Muskauer Strasse in the American Sector. For eight months he had been unemployed, and as the official pushed the slip of paper over the counter his heart rose at the thought that there might be a job for him at last.

Turning the card over, he saw the job offered was that of "watchman" and that the request for watchmen had come from British Military Government on January 30th.

Green Battle-dress

When young Peters turned up at 9. a. .m. at the barracks as requested he found plenty of familiar faces — 40 other young men whom he had often seen at the labour exchange. Another German, in green-dyed British battle-dress, suddenly appeared, formed them into a ragged column, and with the remark "We shall soon turn you into proper men" marched them off to another part of the barracks.

"Were any of you in the Storm Troops or the SS?" shouted the uniformed man. Two of the men raised their hands, and were called into the building, emerging proudly 15 minutes later to announce that they had been taken on.

After a long wait, Peters was called in. He found himself facing a commission composed of two Englishmen in civilian clothes, flanked by four Germans in green uniform. The questions came fast:

"Were you in the Hitler Youth?"

"What branch of the army did you belong to?"

"How much front-line service did you see?"

"What weapons can you handle?"

Before he had a chance to object he was bundled into another room, ordered to undress, and given a quick medical examination. Then on to another green uniformed German. **"You will get good rations and uniform and live here in barracks. Term of service in the watchman's corps is one year. You get a good chance** to learn English, but you are allowed to speak German off duty."

"Not for me" said Peters. "I don't want to be a soldier again and anyway my wife is sick and I have to look after her".

"Don't be a fool" said the recruiting sergeant. "You have been sent here by the labour exchange, and if you turn down the job you are likely to lose your unemployed pay."

This threat was enough for many of the young men who had been sent to take up jobs as watchmen, but Peters remained firm. Refusing to sign the form presented to him he started on the long walk back into the centre of Berlin. As he left the barracks he could see dozens of other "watchmen", in the harmless looking green uniform, doing rifle drill to English words of command on the barrack square.

NAZI "INVASION" DUE

10,000 nazi officers and non-coms "especially selected for their military experience" will soon be training in the United States, the New York Herald Tribune revealed on February 20th.

"The project was evolved following a visit to America by a high-ranking German general-staff officer who was given VIP treatment and taken to major American training camps" stated Edwin Hartrich, Herald Tribune's Frankfurt correspondent.

"The men will be given basic American military training in weapons, organisation and other facets of American military life.

"Following this period of intensified training — half Germanic and half American — these officers and men will then be used to train conscripts along American patterns.

"The officer who originated the plan pointed out that he himself would have to undergo extensive 'military re-education'. He added: 'For example, through I was chief of staff of a German Army Corps in Russia I still don't know the techniques of close air support of ground troops.'

"This project is reminiscent of the famed '100,000—man Reichswehr' at the end of World War I which became popularly known as 'an army of sergeants'. This cadre in turn then rebuilt the expanding German army developed by Adolf Hitler."

SPECIAL NOTICE TO READERS IN GREAT BRITAIN

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Businessmen meet on east-west trade

by Josef Orlopp, Government Commissioner of the German Democratic Republic for Inner-German Trade.

The World Economic Conference to be held in Moscow in April 1952 will give German merchants and industrialists from all parts of the country the chance to discuss on an international level trade between western and eastern Europe.

Under the Potsdam Agreement German was guaranteed the right to trade freely within her own borders, and the USA, Great Britain and France agreed with the demand of the Soviet Union that the country should be treated as an economic unit.

West cuts ties

Since 1945 the western powers have broken this international agreement innumerable times, systematically cutting the economy of West Germany off from the east. West Germany became a source of raw materials for the USA, and in July 1948 this policy led to the sealing of the zonal frontiers on the orders of the American Occupation Authorities.

This measure not only cut West Germany off from East Germany, but at the same time cut it off from the whole of eastern Europe. Since this date unemployment in West Germany has been steadily rising, and this strangling of trade has undoubtedly been one of the reasons for this development.

Agreements broken

Up until the date of the formation of the Bonn government in September 1949 trade between the two areas in Germany was arranged between Germans themselves, and the exchange of goods effected was of benefit to both sides. Since the allegedly "sovereign" West German government was installed in Bonn by American bayonets, trade agreements have had to be submitted to the western High Commissioners. This has made negotiations with West Germany more and more difficult, and the Americans have gone so far as to order that trade agreements already concluded should be broken, and that goods already paid for should not be delivered.

In order to strangle trade between West Germany and the country of the peace bloc the Americans no longer content themselves with lists of restrictions and black lists. British and American military police have been stationed directly on the frontiers to stop any such trade by brute force.

The West German authorities are no longer in a position to grant export licences in accordance with economic needs; American specialists give the decision as to whether the goods may be exported or not. As a result of continual American interference the turnover in inner-German trade fell from 600 million marks in 1949 to only 200 million marks in 1951.

Unity demand

People in all parts of Germany are becoming more insistent in their demands that the political and economic unity of Germany should be restored in accordance with the conditions of the Potsdam Agreement. In all parts of West Germany, businessmen interested in inner-German trade have established working groups. Representatives of such groups from Hamburg, Wuerttemberg, the Rhineland and West Berlin have approached the government of the German Democratic Republic. They have requested that ways and means be found for them to trade with the German Democratic Republic and the countries of eastern Europe without the interference of the Americans. They have seen clearly that the future of German industry lies not in the western European market but in trade with the eastern countries.

It is exactly this aim which will be pursued in Moscow at the economic conference called on the initiative of the World Peace Council: the re-establishment of normal, peaceful trade between all peoples in the east the west.

DO YOU REMEMBER THE BLITZ? . . . THE ARDENNES MASSACRE? . . . AUSCHWITZ? . . .

The German Soldiers' Newspaper, published and sold freely through West Germany, addresses itself to the officers and non-commissioned officers of the old nazi army, and particularly to those organized in the various old soldiers' organizations.

Despite Law No. 16, issued by the Western Allied High Commission on December 16th 1949, forbidding explicitly all ex-service organizations, there are known to be at least 48 such organizations.

The vast majority are paramilitary organizations and the core of a new nazi army. Here are a few of their names: Waffen-SS, Legion Condor, First Legion, Stahlhelm, and Association of Frontline Poets and War Correspondents.

The next page gives a selection of quotations from the Soldiers' Newspaper. In translation it is impossible to give the full flavour of the original articles, which are written either in heel-clicking Prussian military jargon, or the ugly slang of nazism.

The Potsdam Agreement, signed in June 1945 stated:

"German militarism and nazism will be extirpated."

. . . NOW STUDY THE OPPOSITE PAGE AND STICK IT UP FOR OTHERS TO SEE

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FÜR EHRE / RECHT UND FREIHEIT / EUROPÄISCHE SICHERHEIT UND KAMERADSCHAFT

GERMAN
Soldiers' Newspaper
FOR HONOUR / JUSTICE AND FREEDOM / EUROPEAN SECURITY AND COMRADESHIP

1952: Freedom from fear

Today we are no longer alone. Clear headed people are gathering in all parts of the world, ready to resist the Bolshevist danger. It is up to us to take part in forming the new age, which should lead us to new shores. It is time for us, the Germans, to assume the spiritual leadership over the other peoples....

All sensible persons, including our opponents of yesterday, must realise that 1952 must be the last year in which the united shaping of our common future can be made more difficult by the existence of the "war criminal" problem. 1952 must bring the solution.

January 1st 1952

✠

Readers' letters

A Swedish reader of the German Soldiers' Newspaper writes to us:

"In the whole world there are thousands upon thousands of people whose hearts are full of sympathy for you, and who condemn and despise the sentences passed by the war criminal courts.

"I am myself a soldier, a member of the Swedish Air Force. The very feeling of pride which we, Swedish soldiers, have for our national army, helps us to understand the bitterness which the shocking Nuremberg sentences must have aroused amongst the German soldiers. We recall with awe the names of the German generals, officers and men who have been hanged. We honour the thought of the men of the Wehrmacht, who must rot in prisons because they did their duty...

"We want to take the best features of former ideologies, whether fascist or democratic, and combine them in a new ideology, European Social-Reformism."

January 31st 1952

Oder front 1945 — Federal parliament 1952

The position today is almost exactly the same as was the position of the German soldiers on the Oder Front in 1945. There is the same thin line of defenders on our eastern frontier. We must send out the call for reinforcements. The difference in the position today is that we have the possibility to get these reinforcements. Today we shall be able to do with success what we then, with our strength dissipated, were not able to achieve.

February 7th 1952

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And they blame the sergeants

In a memorial service for fallen soldiers the Mayor of Aschaffenburg, Dr Leeb, has dared to speak of the memory of "those who were sweated to death on the barrack square". It is scarcely worth wasting words on a person capable of uttering such a despicable slander. It is ridiculous to make the drill sergeants responsible for exercises which at the front saved the lives of thousands....

We must see to it that an end is put to these arguments against the military life, arguments which date from times when witches were still being burnt. The new soldierly spirit will be formed upon a basis of martial necessity, not on a ridiculous defamation of the old army traditions.

February 7th 1952

✠

News of the association

A really soldierly man knows the laws of conflict. He knows that it is very seldom that the first battle leads to victory. After the first battle all good soldiers clench their teeth with concealed wrath but with cool heads, make sure of fresh munitions, learn from the battle just passed, gather round their leaders, use well the time until the moment comes to attack again. A body which throws itself again and again into the fray will one day reach its goal.

February 14th 1952

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Unanimous approval for Hansen

At the delegate meeting held in Hanover on January 5th and 6th the Association of Pensionable Former Wehrmacht Members decided to change its name to Association of German Soldiers and Professional Soldiers. Admiral Gottfried Hansen was elected chairman, and Sergeant Otto Mosbach was elected Vice-Chairman. Members of the committee include General Kurt Linde and General Gustav Keim....

In his address Admiral Hansen stated that the Association was the body for all German soldiers of all ranks, and that it was one of the jobs of the organization to fight against the defamation of the German soldier. The German military should be regarded in their true light as the defenders of European-Occidental culture.

January 10th 1952

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Nominal rolls of medal-holders

The firm "Medal Collector" of Berlin Wilmersdorf, Am Volkspark 97 has the official nominal rolls of holders of the Pour la Mérite, the military order of Max-Joseph ... The firm is at present engaged in compiling a list of the names of the holders of the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross. Full information upon receipt of return postage.

February 14th 1952

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Book corner

"Despite Everything" by Hans-Ulrich Rudel. Published by Lothar Leberecht, Waiblingen, Wuertemberg.

Hans-Ulrich Rudel, Germany's most successful Stuka pilot, destroyer of over 500 enemy tanks and sole holder of the Golden Oak Leaves to the Knight's Cross with Swords and Diamonds, is the man above all who had to write of his war experiences. He summed up in his person the qualities of a true German soldier: knowledge, courage, devotion to duty to the last, an invincible belief in Germany. Such a man, anything but a mercenary, really converted aims and ideals into living reality.

February 14th 1952

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

Berliners are traditionally rather stolid people, possibly because they eat so many potatoes and because their cooking can be compared only to that of southern England for dullness.

That is why I was so surprised last week when I saw the audience coming out of the local suburban cinema, arguing at the tops of their voices, waving their arms and indulging in other un-Berlinish activities.

I was so surprised that I bought a ticket and went in to see the next show. The cinema was screening "The Condemned Village" ("Das verurteilte Dorf"), a new film just completed by DEFA, the film production company of the German Democratic Republic.

Quiet village

The film started quietly enough — a young German returns from a prisoner of war camp to his little village in West Germany, a picturesque out of the way village where life has not changed much for generations. During the lively harvest festival, a message suddenly arrives from the county authorities: the village must be evacuated. It is to be razed to the ground to make room for a new American bomber base.

The news spreads like lightning. The village mayor goes to argue with the county and the provincial authorities. They shrug their shoulders and say "orders from above". The village priest, played in masterly fashion by Eduard von Winterstein, grand old man of the German stage, pleads fruitlessly with his bishop.

But the farmers and the peasants have decided that they must help themselves, and they barricade their houses when the semi-militarised West German police come to evict them.

Led by Priest

The workers from the nearby town, scheduled to construct the airbase, go on strike in support of the farmers. Led by their mayor, their priest, and the young man back from the wars who never wants to see another, they face American troops with a solid barrier of passive resistance.

Supported by the building workers and the farmers from the surrounding countryside they win the day. The little men, standing together, have won a battle in the fight for peace.

In cold print the story may seem trite, but it is filmed with an intensity and passion which in the opinion of most critics here puts it on a level with the great classics of the cinema. It was filmed in a real village, with real farm families playing many of the supporting roles, and the live quality of the film, together with its gripping theme, were the secret behind the extraordinary audience reaction.

As I said, Berliners are notably stolid, but they lived the film as it played, rejoicing with the farmers when they won a victory, cheering the striking workers as they marched to the support of the farmers singing the old American union song "Hold the Fort".

And their enthusiasm did not stop when the film ended. They carried it into the streets outside, where they stood in the snow and mush, discussing the picture.

I can only urge any readers who are members of film clubs, or who are lucky enough to live near continental specialty film theatres to demand to see this film. It is by far the best film yet to come out of East Germany, and one of the greatest peace films of all time.

Iron Curtain?

In the hope that even the most unlikely soil might prove fruitful, we sent a package of copies of No. 1 of GERMAN REPORT to the American Press Centre in West Berlin. The paper was distributed to correspondents, several of whom telephoned me (telephones work freely across the sector boundaries in this odd city) and told me they had read it with interest. Someone must have decided however that even correspondents could not be allowed to read the truth about what they were supposed to report on.

At the same time that General Ridgeway in Korea was banning western newspapermen from speaking to their opposite numbers at Panmunjon, an employee of the American Press Centre in Berlin packed up the copies of GERMAN REPORT No. 3 in a nice clean envelope, carried them over into the East Sector of Berlin to take advantage of cheaper postage rates here, and mailed them back to me.

Hitler Platz soon?

With the remilitarisation and renazification of West Germany the game of renaming streets has started all over again. The city council of Stuttgart, American Zone, voting down Socialist and Communist opposition, has changed the name of Thaelmann Street back to Long Street. In 1945 the street had been named after Thaelmann, leader of the German Communist Party in its fight against Hitler, who was murdered by the nazis in 1944 after eleven years in prison and concentration camp.

The little town of Wyk on the coast of the North Sea in the British Zone has now gone even farther, and has renazified one of its street names. At the beginning of this year the town council decided to give the main street, known since 1945 simply as Grand Street, its old nazi name of Friedrich Christiansen Street. Who was Friedrich Christiansen? A nazi air force general who has just been released from a Dutch jail where he had served a term as a war criminal.

Granny's Worries

Most popular feature of Berlin's most popular newspaper, the "B. Z. am Abend", published in the Democratic East Sector, is the full page of readers' letters printed every day. Some of the letters follow the traditional pattern, denouncing women's hats and reporting hearing the first cuckoo, but more and more of the hundreds of letters which come in daily are devoted to the real problems of daily life. The paper's readers register complaints, make suggestions, and ask for advice.

A few weeks ago a grandmother, Frau Gertrud Schmidtke, wrote to say that her brother, owner of a prosperous business in Brazil, had invited her to join him there because of the danger of war in Europe. She asked other readers for advice on what she should do.

To date 38 replies have come in. Three pessimists wanted Frau Schmidtke to emigrate, but the other 35 advised her to stay in Berlin, not to fear war but to take part in fighting for peace. Frau Schmidtke has now declared that she intends to stay, and to help to the best of her ability in rebuilding Berlin from the ruins.

Crack of the Week

West Berlin had become terribly expensive and was getting dearer every day, one American occupation officer complained to another.

"I wouldn't say that" he replied. "After all, we can buy Lord Mayor Reuter for a few dollars".

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